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DEPARTMENT FOR S/WE: SASHA MEHRA AND GERDA LANE

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SUBJECT: HUNGARY: NAMES OF INFLUENTIAL WOMEN

REF: SECSTATE 202341

11. (U) Embassy Budapest recommends the inclusion of the following names in reftel contact list:

Dr. Klara Dobrev: The wife of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany, Dr. Dobrev has become an influential albeit informal advisor to her husband and an energetic spokesperson for his government. A lecturer at a Budapest law school, she has also made health care a priority issue with her energetic outreach efforts to encourage healthy lifestyles among Hungarian children. The daughter of an influential Communist official, Dr. Dobrev has often been the target of criticism from the opposition but remains the most powerful woman in Hungary.

Katalin Szili: The Speaker of Parliament and a senior member of the governing MSZP party, Szili narrowly missed election to the Presidency in 2005 and is discussed as a potential candidate for the party leadership. She has used her office to venture into foreign affairs, travelling extensively and focusing in particular on the integration of neighboring states into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Dr. Ibolya David: Member of Parliament and leader of the independent opposition Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), Dr. David is consistently ranked among the most popular political figures in Hungary. The MDF's success in passing the threshold required for representation in Parliament was widely seen as a reflection of her personal charisma, and she remains far more popular than the party she leads. A former Minister of Justice, she has used her position in Parliament to stake out the middle ground between the Socialist-led government and the rightist opposition. She is now working to raise her international profile and is currently planning on a trip to the U.S.

Foreign Minister Kinga Goncez: The daughter of former President Arpad Goncez, the FM was a surprise appointment to PM Gyurcsany's cabinet. Her background is primarily in social issues, and the opposition has made much of her alleged "lack of experience" in diplomacy. Nonetheless, she has been active in representing Hungary abroad, including a meeting with the Secretary in Washington last fall.

Szilvia Krizso: As the host of the prime-time information program "Este" on Hungarian Public Television, Krizso attracts an audience of between 500,000 - 1,000,000 Monday - Friday.

12. (U) Embassy POC on Women's Issues is Political Officer CJ Hamilton.

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